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Sen. Allen's tourism sign legislation signed into law

LANSING – Legislation designed to give tourism in northern Michigan a big boost was signed into law this week, announced Sen. Jason Allen, R- Traverse City.

Public Act 528, sponsored by Allen, allows for the erecting of tourist-oriented directional signs within the jurisdiction of a local unit of government, if approved by the local governing body.

“I heard from rural communities all across Michigan who were looking forward to the opportunities created by this bill,” Allen said. “I’m glad to see this legislation signed into law. Local governments and tourist related businesses will now have even more opportunities to promote tourism in northern Michigan.”

Allen sponsored the legislation after learning about difficulties the Mallard Golf Course owners Arnold and David Smith were facing in establishing a tourist-oriented directional sign for their business. According to David Smith, the one summer they had a directional sign their business increased.

The city of East Jordan approved the erection of a directional sign; however, the Smiths were later informed by the department of transportation that the sign was against the law. The golf course depends heavily upon tourists.

Under the new law, operators of tourist-based businesses will be allowed to have signs erected if they are allowed by local ordinance. Once approved at the local level, businesses will have to apply through the Michigan Department of Transportation for a permit to have a tourism-related directional sign installed.

“This law will benefit both the tourist looking to find all of Michigan’s hidden treasures and businesses that rely heavily on tourists,” Allen said. “This law will help give economies that rely on tourism a shot in the arm.”

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